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*Photos by: Paul Crosby*

**Renovation of Minneapolis’ Baker Center**

**features Tubelite’s curtainwall and storefront**

Walker, Michigan (Oct. 2017) – Conveniently located in the heart of downtown Minneapolis, the renovated 90-year-old Baker Center showcases a prominent new building entry featuring Tubelite curtainwall and storefront systems. At the corner of Marquette Avenue and Eighth Street, the main entry provides a unified façade for the four buildings that comprise the complex.

Owned by The Travelers Companies and managed by Transwestern, the Baker Center boasts more than 1 million square feet of office and retail space. It consists of the Baker Building, Investors Building, Roanoke Building and the 730 Building. The Baker, Roanoke and Investor buildings were built in the 1920s. The 730 Building was completed in 1968. The $25 million renovation started in 2016, continued in phases to minimize distribution to occupants and concluded in July 2017.

“The goal of the design was to honor the historic aspects of the buildings, while creating unique modern spaces to support today’s mobile worker,” stated David Serrano, AIA, a principal with RSP, the architectural firm heading up the design. “The result takes advantage of the art deco bones of the building, while introducing forward-thinking amenities like the concierge desk and rooftop deck.”

To reflect the updated look and performance for this property, Brin Contract Glazing’s team worked closely with the architect, construction manager Hightower Initiatives, general contractor JE Dunn and Tubelite to install the curtainwall. “It was a logistically challenging project,” admits Scott Ide, Brin Contract Glazing.

He elaborates, “Each time the demolition team removed a window, you didn’t know what you’d find. The four buildings had been combined over the years into one. With different construction techniques for each, and no existing drawings from the original architects or the many earlier remodeling contractors, drawings and revisions were nonstop throughout the renovation.”

An essential design element in the Baker Center’s renovation is the dramatic corner constructed using Tubelite’s 400TU Therml=Block® Screw Spline Curtainwall, vertically butt-glazed with horizontal covers. Ide notes, “A massive amount of steel was added to properly anchor the curtainwall. It’s the main feature of the building from the fourth to the top floor.”

The lower levels feature Tubelite’s TU24000 Therml=Block dual-pocket, poured and debridged thermal storefront on the exterior, and 4500 Series storefront on the interior. Expanded window lines at street level offer a view into the new entry lobby featuring a 60-foot media wall. At the architect’s request, TU24000 Therml=Block storefront also was used for the windows on the upper stories.

“In Minnesota’s cold climates, Tubelite Therml=Block products provide superior energy and condensation resistance performance using multiple thermal barriers, while providing structural integrity and aesthetic flexibility,” explains Mary Avery, Tubelite’s vice president of marketing.

*(more)*

She continues, “Optimizing thermal performance helps lower the load on HVAC systems and reducing associated energy costs, while maintaining a comfortable interior temperature. Reducing condensation can improve a building’s appearance and sanitation, and minimize damage to adjacent building materials.”

Tubelite relies on Linetec to provide the thermal strut, thermal pour and debridged, plus the finishing for its aluminum framing members. For the Baker Center project, the aluminum is finished in a clear anodize. Anodizing is the most durable and longest lasting option for finishing architectural aluminum building products. Because it is an integral part of the aluminum substrate, the anodic coating provides excellent wear and abrasion resistance with minimal maintenance.

Complementing the low-maintenance, durable, thermally broken, high-performance aluminum framing, Tubelite’s curtainwall and storefront was glazed with low-e, 1-inch Solarban® 60 and low-iron glass with warm edge spacers and argon fill from Vitro Architectural Glass provided by Oldcastle.

Within its glass-enclosed comfortable interior, the Baker Center’s top amenity floor sports high-tech, flexible conference room space, a collaborative lounge and concierge services designed to appeal to today’s workforce. There is also an on-site fitness center and rooftop patio with views of the Minneapolis skyline.

The project team modernized the downtown icon, while maintaining some of its history through design elements. “Now that the project’s completed, everybody’s happy with it,” reports Ide. “It’s a better performing building with a dramatically improved look.”

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**Baker Center, 8th Street and Marquette Avenue, Minneapolis, MN**

* Owner: The Travelers Companies, Inc., https://www.travelers.com
* Property manager: Transwestern®, https://www.transwestern.com
* Architect: RSP Architects, http://rsparch.com
* Construction management company: Hightower Initiatives, http://www.hightowerinitiatives.com
* General contractor: JE Dunn Construction Group, Inc., https://www.jedunn.com
* Glazing contractor: Brin Contract Glazing, http://www.bringlass.com/brin-contract-glazing
* Glazing systems – glass fabricator: Oldcastle, Inc.; http://www.oldcastle.com
* Glazing systems – glass manufacturer: Vitro Architectural Glass; Pittsburgh; http://www.vitroglazings.com
* Glazing systems – finishing and thermal improvement services: Linetec, Wausau, Wisconsin; http://www.linetec.com
* Glazing systems – storefront and curtainwall manufacturer: Tubelite Inc.; Walker, Michigan; https://www.tubeliteinc.com
* Photos by: Paul Crosby
* Video – animated tour by RSP Architects: http://rsparch.com/2017/02/20/baker-center-animation

*About Tubelite Inc.*

*Established in 1945, Tubelite celebrates 70 years of dependable service, fabrication and distribution of architectural aluminum products. Part of Apogee Enterprises, Inc., the company is an industry leader in eco-efficient storefront, curtainwall and entrance systems, and recognized for its fast, reliable and consistent delivery. Tubelite’s corporate office, fabrication, warehouse and shipping operations are located in Walker, Michigan. Its Dallas location provides additional fabrication, warehouse and shipping operations and its facility in Reed City, Michigan, houses the company’s aluminum extrusion operation.*

*Tubelite and its staff are members of the American Architectural Manufacturers Association (AAMA), the American Institute of Architects (AIA), the Construction Specifications Institute (CSI), the Glass Association of North America (GANA), the National Fenestration Rating Council (NFRC), the Society of Military Engineers (SAME) and the U.S. Green Building Council (USGBC).*

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